

POEMS AND SONGS OF LIFE

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HORATIO WALLACE

WRIGHT
& BROWN

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Wallace, Horatio

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By
HORATIO WALLACE

WRIGHT & BROWN
4 FARRINGDON AVENUE,
LONDON, E.C.4

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY PURNELL AND SONS, LTD.
PAULTON (SOMERSET) AND LONDON

PREFACE

IN this little book I have endeavoured to portray in verses some of the lights and shadows through which you and I, and all of us, must pass on our life's journey. The great Joys as pictured by Maeterlinck are Presences which pervade that other world, though some are so fortunate as to behold for a brief moment the shining of their wings, on this side of the portal; but the happinesses are the flowers, which lit by sunshine, or darkened by shadow, grow beside our feet as we fare forward. There is no valley of the soul's shadow in which we may not hear some bird singing, if our spirits be attuned thereto.

To
MY WIFE

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PROLOGUE

Even as an instrument of music speaks
Not of itself, but echoing the soul
Of him who plays thereon; such are these songs,
Part mine, part yours, for we are all akin;
And thus my grief may sing your grief for you,
My longing voice your longing, my desire
May speak as yours; perchance in some few hearts
I may awaken echoes; be it so.
If but some few, I have not writ in vain.

THE SPIRAL

For ever and for ever
Life in a spiral moves,
And with a changing wonder
We mount the shining grooves,
With dream on dream forgotten,
Perplexed with near, and far,
Till, lo! the Apex where all things
Shine, marvellous, as they are.

ANIMAE DIMIDIUM MEAE

“Half of my soul,” ah Roman Horace, well
Hast thou divined affection; caught perchance
From star-like Plato’s airy imagings,
Nay, rather from that heart of kindness in thee
Voicing the hope of man. “Half of my soul,”
So, lacking thee, unperfect; dearest life
Who art to me my being’s counterpart,
If haply sometime reading in this book
(I being here, or gone, it matters not),
Thou chance to pause awhile o’er this brief song,
Know, that love’s measure cannot be expressed,
And therefore lest I fail and lest I err,
Even in attempting, and profane the divine,
I am fain to avail me of the ancient phrase
Sweet with a deathless love through all those years.

TO G. W.

Brother, when Time hath streaked thy gold with gray,
And stooped thy back, and round the nimble knees
And light feet twinkling over lawn and lea
Hath woven his viewless shackles; may the years
Changing, not marring, alter not in thee
Fair faith, nor high endeavour, nor wingèd dreams
That lit thy dawning youth with orient gold
When earth was Eden; nor avail to unwing
The soul insistent on its chivalrous quest;
For years are forceless when they would assail
Dear love, and the unchangeable heart of youth.

SACRIFICE

I am Sacrifice,
The divine child of Love and of Pain.
Those who shun me, lose, ah me,
The flower of sad felicity.
To those who clasp me, lo I give
A long eternity to live.
In one great hour compact of life,
They pass, but passing, out of strife
And the loud turmoil of mean days
They enter on immortal ways,
Where, moving with divine accord
They, with all souls who have adored
And died in adoration, dwell,
My gifts are deathless; I give well.

Seek me where roars the battle,
And thou shalt find me,
But seek some room, made blank and poor,
Where faith contends with loss,
Where, stretched upon a bitterer cross,
Blind, loving hearts endure,
Seek, thou shalt find me,
Child of Love and Pain.
These give; but surely shall receive again.

THE RACE ICONOCLASTES

The race Iconoclastes
Go forth with mall in hand,
They go to smite the idol,
To purify the land,
And the race Iconoclastes
Shall live while truth doth stand.

The race Iconoclastes
Are born to grief and woe,
Their lives are storm, their deaths are red,
It was, is, shall be so,
But the race Iconoclastes
Steadily forward go.

The race Iconoclastes
Cry with a fervent cry,
They smite the shapen image,
And in their smiting, die,
The people rend them in their wrath,
And spurn them where they lie.

The race Iconoclastes
Renew their power amain,
They feed their minished armies,
Nor stop to count the slain,
The race Iconoclastes
Go forth to war again.

The race Iconoclastes
Prevent the coming day,
They see the morning waken
Before the East is gray,
The race Iconoclastes,
Can see, and praise, and pray.

THE KING

(May 6th, 1935.)

This; to the King; we have gone through together
Those troubled years of tumult and dismay,
Have heard the loud seas roar, seen the wild weather,
Sure, in foreknowledge, of a kindlier day.

Yet we rode out the storm, in those uncharted
Long leagues of danger, racing, ridge on ridge,
And through the weary night saw our great-hearted,
Strong, patient captain, steady on the bridge.

So we won through; many the vacant places;
Yet love and pride light our remembering,
And there is challenge in those deathless faces,
For us who live, who had, who have—a King.

CHOOSE YE,—THIS DAY

I

Disarm, oh Earth, there is no other way,
If man would save the garnered store of man
From stark annihilation; in the van
Let each strive forward, work, and plan, and pray,
Ere the devouring fires of war's dread day
Leap fierce upon us; each do as he can,
Fervent, and swift; never since Time began
Was dawn so fraught with hope, or with dismay.

And when light broadens, what shall man behold,
His deeds, his every half-accomplished dream,
In one disintegrating ruin hurled
To chaos? or that morn of dazzling beam
Where Trust, and Love move lordlier than of old,
And Bethlehem heals again a wounded world.

CHOOSE YE,—THIS DAY

II

To fight for faith is needful, but to fight
To mere impairment of the spirit's good
Is crime, to be outfaced with fortitude
By men who see. Strong Evil's formless might
Stands never obvious, lying hints, and slight,
Outflank our army, many a misty rood
Confused in cloud, nor to be understood
Till some Ithuriel touch evoke the light.

And in the council chamber lo we see,
The crouched and sordid Mammon entering,
A lord of darkness he, who not in vain
Privily feeds the foul fire for his gain,
Gold, smeared with blood. God fledge some angel's wing
To save from this obscene iniquity.

THE GIFT OF THE YEARS

Till I was old
I never knew the beauty of the grass,
And all the living airs that blow,
As viewlessly they pass:
Ah, dearest friend, so may it be,
That as thou growest old, the world grows young for thee.

When we shall die,
Shall we behold yet stranger things,
When with our unsealed eyes we read
That book of God's imaginings?
What visions of the Eternal shall be ours!
What unconceived grace, what soul of all the flowers!

When we shall die,
Shall we not drink that reconciling tone
That blends all discord in accordance sweet,
And mingles all earth's music into one,
The mighty diapason, the deep breath
Of life, made clear, made audible, by death?

When we shall die, Time's sweetest voices ending
Shall leave a tranced pause, ere shall begin
Slow, with deep chords, the music all transcending,
Or shrilling, piercing-sweet with trebles thin,
Like souls in aspiration and desire,
The timeless voice of Life, like music and like fire.

THE SPIRIT OF THE JOY OF BEING

I am the spirit of the Joy of being
Whose home is hidden in the lives of men,
Like viewless wind beyond all mortal seeing
I go, and swiftly do I come again,
I shape myself in every blossom's grace,
I shine in human eyes; I do inform each face.

When summer clothes the woodland with its greenness
Roses, like faery porcelain adorn
The hedgerows, and the maiden at her bosom
Weareth the heavy rose with curvèd thorn;
And with the rose and with the maid am I,
And mine is Love, and passion's morning sky.

When the hyacinth blossoms in the wildwood
And the crocus by the pathway near the door,
I lead forth the small steps of laughing childhood,
Even as their fathers followed me of yore;
And with old age I from the threshold see
The dark bud swelling on the young ash tree.

A PORTRAIT

Golden and incommunicable thoughts,
The spirit's rarest heritage, be thine,
Saint of my soul's adoring, whose regard
Is mild as summer, pensive and devout,
With so much of the nun as doth not chill
Love in the blood of youth, but lends the rather
An added grace, no common fragrance shed
On every wilding rose of maidenhood
That the boon season and the gracious time
Hourly create; for souls have varying graces
And to fulfil their fate receive from heaven
Various dower of blessing; love be thine
And peace, and happy uneventful days
Whose season's calendars shall be the flowers,
Nor ever thought of unreturning Time
And that unrest that fathers all despair
Lodge in thy heart; but as thy life is gentle,
So may thy heaven be near thee all life long
That death may be a passing, and no change.

LOVE—THE CHILD

I met Love in the valley, Love the child
Whose eyes are stars, whose voice is as a wind
Sighing in hazel copses; "Come," he said,
"Love me and follow, for all the world is mine,
Mine are sweet lips, soft tresses, and the gleam
Of maiden eyes with dewy lustre wet,
Vows, kisses, sighs, and songs of sweet accord,
And if I lack a joy of all the earth
I have not known it. Follow," he cried, "oh follow
For death divides not Life, journeying with me."

THE REFUSAL

Oh softly falls the pale moonbeam
On yonder silent hill,
Oh swiftly flows the willowed stream,
And all beside is still.

As fair as yon pale trembling beam
That quivers from the moon,
So pure, so heavenly, didst thou seem,
And fled'st, alas, as soon.

Heaven I implored, that grief might die,
Love's answer whispered low,
"Grief shall depart with memory,
Ah, can'st thou wish it so?"

"Nay, rather utmost grief be mine,
Still anguished may I be,
Ere to oblivion I resign
One treasured thought of thee."

(For music.)

THE END OF THE WAY

When we come to the end of the way,
Nigh to the top of the hill,
When the noise of the peopled valley
Is still.

When the great sky-spaces are filled
With silence that speaks like sound,
And the wash of the tide of the infinite air
Around.

Shall we long to return to the strife
Where we bore us as men,
To live in the tumult and clamour of action
Again?

With the fierce light of living around us,
Bright passions, strong beams,
Shall we feel we are shadows of shadows
In dreams?

If we do we have failed, we are blind,
We are yet to discern
The glories of infinite being, that beckon,
And burn.

For our eyes shall grow quick to behold
The new life that is ours,
When the endless aeons of beauty awaken
Like flowers.

With petal on petal unfolding,
Light born of new light,
And passion, clear-eyed as the angels,
Whose might

Shall no more bring grief and dividing,
As our sad years have known,
But knit in one life all those longings,
Our own.

We shall never be lost and diffused
As a nebulous fire,
But this soul that God gave shall persist,
And desire.

And the souls we have loved shall be there,
Brothers—sisters—our own,
All clear to our eyes, as to God's,
The more loved, as more known.

THE GIFTS OF LOVE

When the living bury their dead
There is much of sorrow,
Many a sad song they sing;
To each there rises the dawn of a gray to-morrow
Bereft of some lovely thing.

The little smile that heartened the soul of living,
The little delicate movement of living grace;
Little, and little, and little, and ever giving
Power, for a moment's space.

She plucked me a rose with an air, a moving, tender
Courtesy born of the years and the days gone by;
Strong in the strength of her breeding, her spirit in
splendour
Shone 'neath the darkening sky.

And he, he strengthened my soul when my spirit lay
broken,
Beneath the bolts of a seeming sorrow and fate
He bade me go forth, and his word in power was spoken,
"They who endure are great."

When the living bury their dead, let them weep, their
sorrow
Is as the gracious kindness of the rain,
Yesterday was, and to-day is, and to-morrow
Bringeth the dawn again.

THE APPLES OF ITHUN

(Ithun, the wife of Bragi, the god of poesy, had certain apples in a chest of ash, and the gods, when they grew weary, repaired to her, and eating of these apples, were renewed in strength.)

There by Asgard,
Ithun, the goddess,
The wise, the lovely,
Laid in the ash chest
Apples of magic,
Guarded and rare.

The great gods took
Of the apples of Ithun,
The broad-browed gods
Of the blood of the Aesir;
Apples of vision
Apples of song.

So went they forth
With the gift of Ithun,
Strong, to o'ercoming,
Strong to endure,
The great gods
Of the blood of the Aesir,
Nurtured in vision,
Strengthened in song.

Still, as of old,
When the gods grow weary,
When Ragnarök darkens
With piled thunder,
With menace of evil,
With nameless foreboding,
They, 'mid the clamouring
Horde of the people,
Strengthen and stay them,
They forget not
The apples of Ithun
Given to the fervent

And fearless seeker,
He who demandeth,
Not taking denial,
Apples of vision,
Apples of song.

Dead are the gods
Odin and Baldur,
Thor and Bragi,
But lovely Ithun
There in the sacred
Clefts of the mountains,
Gives to the sons
Of the blood of the Aesir
The lords who rule
The spirits of men,
To each one, lonely,
In Spirit-silence
With sound of the wind
In the clefts of the mountains,
Mid roaring of torrents
A deep crag-thunder,
With doom of the fate
Of the trust that is in them;
Apples of vision,
Apples of song.

So go they forth
Enduring, prevailing,
Lords and leaders
Of countless people,
And still as they weary,
The clefts of the mountains
Receive and enfold them,
And feed their spirit
With dreams begotten
Of music and silence;
Apples of vision,
Apples of song.

HAIL, DIVINE LIGHT!

Hail, divine Light!
Swift is thy coming,
Short is our seeing,
Swift is thy going,
Hail, divine Light!

From the deep thou comest,
Hail, divine Light!
To the deep thou returnest,
And as thou burnest,
Shinest with Godhead,
Hail, divine Light!

They who have seen thee
But for a day,
Never forget thee,
Cannot betray,
Heaven is their vision,
Beams shed from thy flight,
Hail, divine Light!

“WHEREFORE ART THOU TROUBLED?”

“Wherefore art thou troubled?
Grieving heart of mine,
God maketh His world about thee
Brightly to shine.

“The flower shines in the meadow,
The leaf bursts on the tree,
Every stream is singing
From the mountain to the sea.

“Every cloud that weareth
Its moment’s robe of heaven,
Is as a joy before thee set,
And was for gladness given.

“The blood of nature pulses
Strong, with a strong heart-beat,
Life is as wine for the living
Strong passion and complete.”

And my heart made answer slowly,
Like a sigh in my breast;
“I know it, yet my being
By some being is opprest.

“There is a wingèd shadow
Not born of me nor mine,
That dims the lovely colour,
That blurs the lovely line.

“The souls of these, my brothers,
Live dark in troubled days,
There is mist about their glories,
There is grief about their ways.

“In dreams I see the unsheathing
Of the archangelic sword,
Yet it slumbers in the scabbard,
Michael waiting for the word.

“Clear in dreams I still behold it
Inch by inch so slowly drawn
Till it leap at last, a portent
The great blaze of the great dawn.

“The vision fades in darkness;
And above the world, I see
With brooding wings of shadow,
The dragon,—mystery.

“The strong wine of living
Beats strong with every beat,
But clouded is the glory
And the passion incomplete.”

HUMILITY

Thou bearer of the unregarded light
Seen of God only, who in mightiest souls
Dost dwell; whose habitation there proclaims
The measure of their power: with feeble ray
To mortal vision thy small candle shines
Outfaced by the world's glare; yet is it constant,
Clear, and continuing, and illuminates
Its little inch of ground, and inch by inch
Moves, and enlightens steadily the way
That the heart follows: thou shy light-bearer
Be thou my guide, lest haply overbold,
Forgetful that true wisdom walks with thee,
I lose that touch of insight which reveals
The mightiness of small things in the world.

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT BROWNING,
POET AND MAN

Great master, who didst erewhile write
To me unknowing, thou unknown,
One kindly word of cheer;
From that bright land where thou dost dwell
With those, who living bore them well,
Give,—for one moment, ear.

No prophet speaking easy things
Wast thou, oh seer of Life,
But one who through the darkness saw
The ultimate design of Law,
And peace beyond the strife.

That strife which wrecks the weaker sense
To thee God made more clear,
Yet still through pain and sorrow, all
Ascend the heights celestial
Though they may seem so near.

The riddle of the maze of life
Undaunted did'st thou face;
'Mid those who dare, and daring win,
And victor, reverent, enter in,
Take thou, of right, thy place.

CHALLENGE

Weigh not their power,
Judge not their strength,
By subtle thought betrayed,
Be not entangled in their coils,
Be not, of words, afraid.

When sounds their trumpet
In those mists,
Insolent on the air,
Throw thou thy gauntlet in the lists,
And dare.

CONSCIENCE

(Lines suggested by G. F. Watts's picture.)

Spirit, who dwellest in the innermost,
Where the soul's self, true child of the divine,
Beats stroke for stroke with God, the Eternal heart
Sensible to His creatures; guide me ever,
For thou art God within; the last resort,
The only and the ultimate appeal,
Lies to thy judgement; cloud and blurring mist
Have there no place, but the clear vision shines,
Illuming, interpenetrating all
With glory, to all evil intolerable;
A beam that blasts, that withers, that consumes
By its mere radiance; yet to noble things
The ether of their glory, where they grow
And broaden to their empire; to subdue
By their inevitable destiny,
Life to their will. Thou art unimageable,
Save as a light, and in the light a face
That fitfully is shaped and bodied forth
And fitfully departs; terrible eyes,
Terrible in their kindness and their love,
Eyes whose clear depth contains eternity;
Full of high passion, pure without a stain,
Whose love is love indeed, whose anger pours
Annihilation. Thou art God within,
Conscience, the dweller in the innermost.

THE PYRAMID

There is a pyramid of liberty
Set in a guarded island of the North,
Ringed by the wave; the men who laid its base
Were freemen, and their children have been free,
By great inheritance of fearless blood;
Tolerant, yea till tolerance seemed a sin,
But ever in the ultimate resort
Acting to purpose. What time they would raise
The four-square point, a cubit nearer heaven,
They broadened still the base; and labouring ever,
With slow accretion built the sloping wall,
Till at the last they met; north, south, east, west,
Crowning their labour in the single point,
The goal of each; so, vaster than before,
And higher, yet as steadfast, stood the pile
Unshaken of storm; The time hath been, when floods,
Years' ruin, or the earthquake's, have made rents
And weeds have rooted; but the patient blood
Reshouldering the burden of their sires,
Made good, with betterment, the stone's decay,
Having within their very hearts the plan
That guides their toil. The time hath been, and yet
The time may be, when the strong breed must face
Like restoration; masons of government
Who build a deathless work that doth endure.

THE GUEST

We seek for joy, and where we seek we find it,
Never,
We plan our bliss, we find it woe,
Heaven will not be captured so,
But in some sudden moment burning
Shines, all our clouds to glory turning:
The unexpected day appears,
The glad child of the patient years;
His eyes are full of tears and light,
With fire and love they shine,
Who, newly from the heaven's height
Beareth the breath divine;
Yet none, for all their learning, know,
Nor simple folk have eyes,
To prophesy when night will go,
Or how that morn shall rise,
We build a palace for our bliss,
The bright guest we implore;
Lo, where our heart's small cottage is,
God entering at the door.

HERO AND LEANDER

She looked across the waters
Where ran the racing tide,
"Never a flood shall sever," she said,
"Never a wave divide,
But we shall love for ever and ever,
Side by side.

"We shall have summer on summer,
Delight wedding delight,
When lip to lip we mingle our kisses
And love burns bright."
Beneath her the salt sea-water hisses
As she looks into the night.

The lamp in the windy turret
Cast forth its guiding gleam,
Nor grew its radiance dimmer
For love's dead dream,
When the power of the sea was poured
on the swimmer,
Borne down the pitiless stream.

CONSTANCY

Ah, smile upon me if thou wilt,
And if thou wilt, then frown,
Thy moods can not avail at all,
To press my vision down,
I know the best that in thee lives,
And knowledge perfect sureness gives.

The moon appears, a slender thread,
The self-same moon is she,
As when her silver shield is spread
To lighten land and sea,
Her changing phases, with delight
Adorn Earth's lovely satellite.

ON A FLOWER BEATEN DOWN BY HAIL

Oh little flower, so slight, so frail,
Now hammered by the driving hail;
We saw the ominous cloud arise
And darken in the western skies,
Nor dreamed it bore on its dark wing
Death to thy tender blossoming;
We saw thy petals, curving, spread
The deep strong glory of their red,
Oh how they loved the air and light!
And in a moment fell their night.
And we too pass, this flesh of ours
Is as the grass, is as the flowers,
Our soul alone, we strongly say
Re-blossoms in a brighter day,
For life is deathless, still renewed;
Thou too, with living power endued
Dost take, as we, from God's own hand
A grace we partly understand;
Thou too hadst life; will it too change
To lovelier? all is dim, and strange.

God works eternal wonders still,
And we the creatures of His will
May, being reverent, learn some day
A little more of His strange way;
Meantime the Godhead shines for me
In man and woman, flower and tree,
And every patch of dewy sward
Is as a garden of the Lord.

“AND MAN BECAME A LIVING SOUL”

The word of the Earth to the soul of the Man,
Came;
To the question, “Can’st thou?” the word “I can”
Returned, like flame.

Challenged, he wrought, and challenged, he strove,
Earth, thy son,
Witness each hill, witness each grove,
Hath he not won?

The word of the Earth was a challenge,
“Do this or die,”
But there came a word on his power,
A word, of the sky.

“Should’st thou?” he heard, be feared,
He was afraid;
For the soul within him was greater
Than the things he had made.

And he trembled ’mid his endeavour,
He faltered ’mid his power,
The dream of Time departed,
The madness of the hour.

“Should’st thou?” “I dare,” “I dare not,”
Rose like a flood,
Born of the ichor of heaven
That lives in our mortal blood.

And he shaped from the word, “I can,”
The potent word, “I may,”
Man becoming—Man,
And facing his judgement day.

He put the curb on desire,
He who was born to rise,
God-inspired, he created
The vision of Sacrifice.

“Thou may,” “Thou ought,” “Thou must,”
With no light labour he strove,
Till, “may,” and “ought,” and “must,”
Shine clear in the sole star “Love.”

THE BODY'S REQUIEM

Lo the end of all thy living,
 All thy labour under the sun,
All thy gaining, all thy giving,
 Closed up, ended, over and done.
Earth lie light on sleeping breast,
Sleep, tired body, sleep and rest.

Here the calm no more is shaken,
 Winds of passion fallen and still,
Horns of war no more awaken
 Man's strong heart to feel their thrill.
The bright sword is sheathed at last,
Quiet come, and danger past.

Here the lover feels no more
 Kindest arms about him clinging,
Hears not on the silent shore
 Faintest sound of sweetest singing.
Passion's songs are hushed and dumb,
Silent, with the soldier's drum.

Quick invention, subtle scheming
 Of the soul that sits apart,
Patient thought and heaven-ward dreaming
 Ended with the silent heart.
Frail, tired body, all outworn,
Sleep, the spirit is re-born.

Ministering love receive thee
 In her breast who gave thee birth,
We who loved thee living, leave thee
 In the dear embrace of earth.
Whence thou camest thou shalt be,
Our souls' shrines shall follow thee.

Land, and sea, and broad winds flowing,
Thou in all shalt have thy part,
Quite beyond our feeble knowing
Infinitely changed thou art.
Loved so long for thy soul's sake
Sleep, tired body, sleep, and wake.

PRAYER

Through all life's music runs the haunting tone
Of something evil, something ominous,
A power beyond our compass, a dim shade
That fronts us darkling; breathe but one swift prayer
And round about thee stand, rank upon rank,
The shining legions of the fields of Heaven.

CHRISTMAS EVE

'Tis Christmas Eve, the night is damp and bleak,
I sit alone remembering ancient days
And imaging the future. Love and death,
Fear, hope, enweave a mazy labyrinth
In which my spirit wanders endlessly,
Holding no clue. It is near Christmas morn,
But a few hours and the resplendent East
Shall lighten with the morning from the sea
Which follows still the ever flying night,
Itself pursued of darkness; all the while
The shaping and inspirèd power in me
Beholds another land wherein the soul
Wanders at will in flower adorned vales
Whose mountains, touched with dawn from Bethlehem
Shine, with the shining of the eternal Christ.

DREAMS

Whatever else thou bearest hence,
Strong and swift Time, ah leave with me
That winged vision, that intense
Persuasion of reality,
For in the dream I hold the rest
Made palpable and manifest;
Leave thou my dreams.

Take youth, take mirth, take fleeting pleasure,
Take strength of limb, quick poise of mind,
I grudge thee not each slighter treasure
If that one gem thou leav'st behind,
In whose deep heart all truths lie hid
As thoughts behind the drooping lid,
Leave thou my dreams.

Those ministers to all our seeing,
The brightest vision and the best,
Where dove-like from the heart of being
Floats love from the Eternal breast,
Where bright intelligences shine,
Heart, mind, and essence all divine;
Leave thou, oh Time, my dreams.

Take, if thou wilt, the plastic power,
The sense and passion to create,
When once has passed the beggarling hour
I shall not mourn, nor gird at fate,
So thou dost leave the immortal light
That shows all, one, and infinite,
So thou dost leave my dreams.

Ah, in our dreams we live alone,
Sister and brother, there we dwell
Most truly, howe'er we be gone
By dark ways indescribable
Toward night, still in our dreams appears
That ray that calms, that guides, that cheers,
Leave thou, oh Time, my dreams.

THE SPELL

How shall I capture my fancies, cage and compel
To live in the garden of love where the bright waters sing;
A joy to me and to all men, How can I capture
And cage each spirit of light, each individual wing?

Could I make me cages, they would escape me,
Fleet, and fly, and be gone in a moment's space.
Where is the possible prison I might shape me,
To confine elusive beauty, to prison absolute grace?

Lo, I have found me a way. I shall make my spirit
A garden, a garden of beauty, where beauty may dwell;
So shall my soul entice them to linger for ever,
Flutter and fly in the leaves, snared by a secret spell.

All uncomelled to linger, in these so exquisite glades,
Finding their heaven about them, an ether of living powers,
So shall I woo these delicate, bird-swift creatures
To dwell, to sing, to abide, long, glad, ineffable hours.

FAITH

I was where bitterness about me lived
Rampant; a strong growth of unkindness growing
And fed with want of thought; a wretched garden
For love to thrive in; yet in that I planted
The seeds of love; that being done, I thought,
"What is their chance of life? these riotous evils
Rooted, emplaced, and thriving, shall o'erdarken
My seedlings with their shadow." Spring appeared,
And with her life came laughing; re-born life,
The year's creation: strongly grew those weeds
After their nature, strongly grew, and broad,
Their base outleafing; yet amid them all
I marked the little sword blades, bright and green
Where love, my careful sowing, sprung from the earth,
And knew they were alive, those seeds of heaven,
So with supreme and trusting carelessness
I went my way.

A PORTRAIT

A spirit strongly overborne,
 To seek the great and utmost good,
A soul exultant as the morn,
 Yet full of even's quietude;
An eye intense and yet serene,
 An instinct sure, calm thoughts and high,
That witness to this earthly scene
 Of commerce in a brighter sky;

Such souls in our acquaintance dwell,
 As unregarded as the day,
We are but blind; we cannot tell
 God's angels walking by the way;
And each unvaluable grace,
 We, wretched, hold for commonplace.

FAR, FAR, AWAY

Far, far, away, when evening dies,
And sweep the shadowing vapours gray,
On wings of dreams my spirit flies,
Far, far, away.

Somewhere beyond the fading day,
In fadeless lands of Paradise,
She yearning wings her lonely way,

Where far withdrawn, in vision lies,
With amber cape and gleaming bay,
The faery land of sunset skies,
Far, far, away.

“FAREWELL, HAPPY FANCIES”

Farewell, happy fancies,
Fare, fare well,
Ye have built a faery bower
Wherein my soul did dwell,
The flowers are withered to the root,
Fare, fare well.

Farewell, happy fancies,
Fare, fare well,
The spirit fain would call you back
But she has lost the spell.
Farewell, happy fancies,
Fare, fare well.

Memories, your sisters,
With me dwell,
They are fair, their voice is sad,
Sad as a slow-swung bell,
Farewell, happy fancies,
Fare, fare well.

It is your voice lives in their voice,
Your grace doth in them dwell,
A changed grace, a mournful grace,
Your grace, I feel too well
The change, ah happy fancies,
Fare, fare well.

LIFE

Lovely is life, and light,
And the sound of singing,
The moon over Winnipeg shining,
Clear on the cold snow,
Lovely is life, dear, with its flowers upspringing,
Need we part, who have met?
Ah no.

We shall have cloud, and rain,
And weary weather,
But ever each for the other
Will waken a smile,
Shall we not journey, dearest of souls, together,
Many, and many a mile?

Ah, youth, youth, youth, it was sweet,
Sweet music, dear laughter;
So shall we say in our age
Looking back to the dream,
But dearer, my dearest, the days of the years that
 come after
Suffused, and instinct, with the gleam.

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE

With grayness of hair and with wrinkling of faces,
 Comes Age,
With gain of wisdom, and loss of graces,
 The lover turned to the sage.
When the fire burns low, and the light is wan,
 And the tune is slower played,
When the fire of strength dies out in the man,
 And the light of love in the maid.

Then, oh my sister, and oh my brother,
 Who hear the April chimes,
Love, and be glad with one another,
 Forestalling the darker times
When you perchance, o'er one dim red ember,
 Sole spark of the fires of yore,
Shall warm thin hands in some far December,
 Sweet youth returns no more.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF LIGHT

So much from fortune we demanded,
So many golden dreams were ours,
When came the day, all open-handed,
Like spring, with flowers.

But time slipped by, and years bereft us
Of our most precious store of days,
And now, grown old, we find this left us,
Not wealth, not fame, not praise.

But some small deed, had moved youth's scorning,
Some little, well-accomplished thing,
To comfort us, when far from morning,
Our gathered days to death we bring.

Some little lifting of the spirit,
Some little tract from chaos won,
These go with us, when we inherit,
That kingdom of the unsetting sun.

MOUNTAIN MIST

Now I look forth and see
Mist moving silently,
A delicate wonder, fold on filmy fold.

With slow involvèd heave
On slow involvèd heave,
Now tints of silver and now tints of gold.

It thickens, and it thins,
And now the light begins
To master it, and now it masters light.

Through the deep valleys drawn,
The winds before the dawn,
Hurry to shred and scatter it on the height.

In some retired nook
Like the eddy in a brook,
It turns and curves in a slow grace recurving,

Now the wind sucks it forth,
Or east, or south, or north,
Bearing it steadily on, a stream unswerving.

This glory that is mine,
This glory that is thine,
These robes wherewith the morning herself arrays,

Diaphanous, delicate, light,
Wavering on the height,
The soul of morning, soul of all the days.

THE WANDERER

Thou strange Eternal Spirit
Like to a child am I,
Who wanders, alone, mid hills, unheeding,
And hears the winds cry;
The winds and waters mourning
In many a haunted hollow and glen,
But never finds the path returning
To the dear homes of men.

EVENING

Lights and the winged shadows of evening
Contend in the upper sky,
The fluttering combat trembles
A flickering and glooming
Of gold and shadow,
As of multitudes of quick birds
That wheel in their squadrons, whirling
With counter-stroke of shadow and gleam.
On the earth beneath, the dusk is spread,
The valleys are full of the night
Violet-robed, and strong with dreams.

HOPE—AND—DESPAIR

Ever to dwell with unaccomplished hope
Creates a stir and tumult in the mind,
Whose ether, troubled with unresting beat
Of eagle's pennons, with tremor eternal thrills;
And such is kin to madness; for desire,
Being the fount and wellhead of the spirit,
If it be dimmed and lose translucency
Dims all the stream of life, clouding the wave
With dreams and vexing thoughts; so man, fond man
Falls from the heaven of high imagination
And kindly summer of accomplished bliss,
Into so dark a winter and so cold,
That none with broader shade or heavier wing
Saddens the spirit, when the retreating light
And southward-flying sun leave desolate
The arctic and intolerable land.
For hope accomplished, girds the soul with wings,
And bears her up, and snatches her from death,
And sweeps o'er deserts waste, and regions void,
Outwings the night, attains unto the dawn,
And comes to peace, and enters into heaven:
But by the gates of hell doth Longing sit,
Desolate, and by her, hollow-eyed, Despair.

THE VISITATION

Worn by long hours I laid me down to rest,
If haply sleep might visit me awhile,
To dull the edge of grief; when suddenly,
Soon as soft sleep was on mine eyelids laid,
I saw a floating vision heavenly-fair,
Angel-like, feminine, ethereal,
And what it spake I know not, yet I knew
And took such joy therein, that when it faded
(Grown viewless in the thinning of its light,
As grows the moon at morning), I was happy;
Seeing with clear, and unclouded eyes
Far as man may, the Wisdom that is God;
And of my grief remained only the shade.

INSPIRATION

A thousand stories and a thousand sorrows
 Speak in those passionate eyes,
Child of the weary nights and sunless morrows,
 Whom no grief can surprise.

And yet a quenchless fire of deathless daring,
 In thy resolved look burns,
When my soul falters on her forward faring,
 To thee, to thee, she turns.

THE MYSTIC

My life is full of flowing joy,
The fountain never fails,
In darkness and in heavy dread
 Its virtue most prevails,
Oh, gentle river of my peace
Still flow, still murmur, never cease.

The power that dwells beyond the stars
 I consciously possess,
Bidden to glory, interfused
 With happy steadfastness;
That shall my inspiration be,
Though griefs, like snakes, encompass me.

I tell, I chant of golden things,
 Alas, they do not understand,
They measure the infinities,
 They spin their ropes of sand.
I seem to tell a foolish tale,
They dream their logic can avail.

DAYBREAK

In the hazy light,
In the first of day,
Ere the sun at his height
Melteth away
The hoar frost from the stubble field,
That autumn maketh gray.

Misty and cold
The roads are drear,
Bitter the wood,
Frozen the mere,
And thin from cottage chimneys curled,
The first smoke rises clear.

Winds light and keen,
Flutter and sigh,
The reeds once green,
Are brown and dry,
They rustle and creak and whisper low,
As light comes gliding by.

The haze grows thin,
The morning breaks,
The sounds begin,
The world awakes,
And in the east the lustrous light
Trembles in rosy flakes.

LOVE'S CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT

Dost thou sleep, and dost thou dream,
 Child of sorrow,
On thee do visions, heaven-descended,
Brood, when day's long grief is ended,
 Short joy from sleep to borrow?

O'er thee in the night, all kindly
 Come sweet graces,
Do they hover softly, lightly,
Brooding o'er thy slumber nightly,
 Lost and loving faces?

Ah, that never, never, Morrow
 That wakes sad light,
Might dissolve their tendernesses
Their sweet smiles and dear caresses,
 Love's children of the night.

Love is life, and life is dreaming,
 Dream, and dream on,
Still beholding heaven above thee,
In the eyes of those that love thee,
 Dream, till night be gone.

Little children of thy loving
 Lost, and doubly dear,
Dost thou see them, laughing, smiling,
With all love's tender art beguiling,
 In the deep night made clear.

In the deep night, when God, all loving
 Unseals the spirit's eyes,
To behold for its uplifting,
Heaven shining through the rifting
 Clouds of the dark skies.

To behold, and so beholding,
 Glory some short while,
As that light that is forever,
Love, the dear goal of our endeavour,
 Lives, living in that smile.

“OH LOVELY SONGS”

Oh lovely songs that rise and fall
On lifting wings along the air,
A flight of fancies magical
Ye charm my soul from care,
Ye are so potent and so sweet,
Melodiously fair.

Oh lovely songs, the spirit drinks
The pure perfection of sweet sound,
Gone is that fear where the heart
 shrinks
In grief and evils bound;
Enthralled in glories and in bliss
In deep entrancements drowned.

Oh lovely songs; your beauty weaves
A glory o'er the common day,
Into itself my soul receives
The light that shines alway;
Sweet messengers to mortal earth
That out of heaven stray.

Oh lovely songs; ye have a soul
That from a soul was sprung
When feeling past the thought's control
Wooed the sweet songs unsung;
And soul with soul commingles still
As when the world was young.

DAWN

Over the mountains
See the new day,
Splendidly shining;

Soul of my loving,
What wakens for thee?
What glory of waters,
What light on the sea,
What gift of new gladness?
A spirit set free,
Splendidly shining.

THE HIGHLAND EMIGRANTS OF 1812

(For them there was no returning.)

Farewell ye hills, where the bright heath is growing,
Farewell ye mountains that look on the sea,
Farewell ye glens where the clear streams are flowing,
No more shall your morning waken for me.

Amid your black rocks, where once I wandered
Musing at eve as the slow night fell,
I shall wander no more, no more forever,
Ye hills of my country, farewell, fare ye well.

The mist of the morning may swathe Sgurr-nan-Gillean,
The sunrise may shine on the bright heather bell,
But I come no more, no more for ever,
Ye hills of my country, farewell, fare ye well.

Bitter was the sorrow, bitter was the parting,
How bitter and how sore let my sad heart tell,
The sea rolls between us; long leagues of the ocean;
Ye hills of my country, farewell, fare ye well.

SUNSET IN THE HEBRIDES

And I beheld the flashing surge innumEROus
Of seas that beat about the many-murmuring
Coasts of the Hebridean Archipelago,
Where, molten into sunset-gold and glorious,
Shine in their splendour all the depths empyreal;
Deep beyond deep withdrawn and burning wonderful
Like those throne-steps of Him who dwells in deity;
A sea beyond a sea encaped and islanded,
A land beyond the land of mortals mystical,
Peopled with thoughts, the children of the soul.

SCOTLAND

What is Scotland to me and to thee,
Dear brother mine?
A land of dreams and of singing,
Of years full of great days;
Of stark strength and clear honour;
Where the men who have gone their ways,
Lived and loved and begat us,
Gave us a treasure to keep,
And we guard the faith of our fathers
Lest we should trouble their sleep;
Dear brother mine.

“WHEN I FORGET THEE, OH JERUSALEM”

MORNING

Over all the islands
Breaks the morning,
Round the great headlands
Pours the sea,
Land of my love,
What dear remembrance,
Wings its way to thee.

Strong over Blaven
And Sgurr-nan-Gillean
Blows the salt breath
Of the gray sea,
A wind of dreams
In the deep corrie
Blowing and blowing
But not for me.

The knife-edge ridge of
Sgurr-nan-Gillean
Splits the vast wind;
The thin mists fly,
And dread Coruisk
Sucks in the eddy,
With wild halloo, and
scream, and cry.

NIGHT

Over thy hills
Is the same moon shining
That here, far off,
I see,
How many hearts, to-night,
Of thy wandering children,
Will breathe a prayer, for
thee.

HAIG OF BEMERSYDE

Cam' ye doon by Leaderfoot
Or cam' ye by the Tweed,
Cam' ye by the Border land
Where men are gude at need?

Oh I cam' doon by Leaderfoot
And through the Leader braes,
And my heart was fu' o' a' the tales
O' the auld wild days.

There thrilled a music thin and clear
Was never shaped o' man;
Of faery and the elfin folk,
Its wizardry began;

Lang, lane, melodies
That lingering die away
When the winds blaw saft in the eerie
licht,
And a' the moors are gray.

And aye upon the sabbin' draft
That drew frae Ercildoune,
There cam' the speech o' an auld-
waird day,
Low under the moon.

A word cam' soughin' doon the air,
"Betide whate'er betide,
The Haig comes hame
To Bemersyde."

"Oh comes he as a stalwart knicht
In strength and in power?"
"He comes a war-worn weary knicht
Fallen before his hour."

“ Oh comes he in the pomp o’ state
O’ wORLD-wide fame?”

“ He comes as comes a kindly Scot
Whose brithers bear him hame.”

“ And is his name in a’ the land?”

“ Aye, and that land is wide,
For he wrought out a heavy darg
To thole, aye and to bide.

“ Stieve he was, and eident,
And a gude knicht in a fray,
And he was o’ the Border blood
Has lasted mony a day.

“ And aye he lo’ed the puir folk
Whose blood to God is dear,
Wha pay the fee o’ hungry war
Year by bitter year.”

Wha lufe shall gie, like lufe shall win,
Lang as the Eildons stand,
And wae’s me for the kindliest heart
In a’ the Scottish land.

Oh Leader, Tweed, and Dryburgh,
Gude guard maun ye keep,
Where Haig, Haig o’ Bemersyde
Sleeps the kindly sleep.

Glossary—Soughin’, sighing ; darg, day’s work ; stieve, determined ; eident, diligent ; maun, must ; thole, bear.

HOAR FROST IN WINNIPEG

A spirit sighed, the work was done,
Between setting and rising sun
This transformèd town of ours
Grew to a miracle of flowers,
White with undertones of blue,
And the calm lights sifting through
The still, pellucid, silent air,
Wrought a wonder everywhere;
Each unnoticed twig and spray
Shone, a marvel, by the way,
Blue and silver, shining white
In delicateness of delight.

It was no more our daily earth;
Something of a magic birth
Possessed it; it was re-create,
A visioned world immaculate.
All was peace, yet thrilling through
That world of silver and of blue,
A power angelic and intense,
Pervaded every listening sense;
And we had dreams, half apprehended,
Of what life is when time is ended,
And passion's streams merge in that sea
Which mortals call eternity.

That other world o'er mastered ours,
That clear white paradise of flowers,
And all our life re-valued shone,
Each deed, and every thought, took on
An aspect of eternal years,
Free from passion, free from fears,
And in an ecstasy of bliss
Took of high heaven the deathless kiss.

All this happened, just as I say
In Winnipeg city once on a day.

A SONG AT SUNRISE

Standing a-tiltœ on the hills of promise
To greet the morning which is ever fair,
How should she dream of evil, and the shadows
That haunt the murky air.

How many orbs of light, her peers, yea greater
Than she may dream advisedly to be,
Swing blind in time's oblivion, unremembered,
Whose light was majesty.

Wide sent they forth their armies and their banners,
They builded, dreaming of the baser things,
The grass o'ergrows their temples, the wild creatures
Prowl in the palaces of vanished kings.

Assyria hath gone down to death and darkness,
The eternal voice of Israel speaketh yet,
The sun of Plato o'er the Attic mountains
Shines and hath never set.

And they alone have given to remembrance
A name on which the years can not prevail,
Who armed them with the mighty sword of vision
Their memory doth not fail.

'Tis dream and vision that shall make a nation
Secure against the years that are to be,
Seek power, seek wealth, ye live one day and perish,
Such have been, such shall be.

ART AND LIFE

The way of right is clear,
The way of art is dim,
In that we see God near,
We can approach to Him.

Therefore it seems to me,
That God the more desires,
The humbler sanctity,
Warmed by the homelier fires.

Yet some there are who dwell,
By birth beyond this sphere,
Their dreams they may not tell,
They are not centred here.

And so again begin
The eternal quest and doubt,
Why were those passions bred within
We dare not live without?

Art may be after all
A yet diviner thing,
A summons of the God; a call
To finer questioning.

MUTABILITY

Ah, how Love, the wanton, the wingèd one,
Fluttering his light wings tremulously,
Nestles a little while in my bosom,
Wanderer of earth and heaven, content thee,
To rest thee a moment, here in this haven.

Caged and confined, no contented captive,
Beats he forever his wings untamable,
Would'st thou fly me, heartless and fugitive,
Leave me, widowed of so brief loveliness
Me, of the beating of thy wings forlorn?

CHARITY

To be enwalled within this mortal flesh
The aspiring soul disdains and would outwing
Spirits, whose path, a light-encompassed way,
Lies in empyreal regions unconfined,
Winged with speed; yet heaven is not in place
Not where the farthest star in glory swings
About the invisible axle of the worlds,
Remotest light; nor can be won by wings
Parting with swiftest flight the humming air
With power seraphic; heaven is heaven alone
Where reconcilement blots transgression out,
Where, like a beam lost in a sea of light,
Man in the Godhead merges; where the soul
In all affection finds celestial peace,
Where pity seeks the poor, where grace abides,
Where charity that hath the sweetest song
Of all the angels, works to noblest ends,
Unguerdoned, unaccepted, undiscerned,
Where love in the clear spirit shines confest.

AT SET OF SUN

Oh, that thy heart may hold
A hidden hoard of pleasure,
That lessens not, grown old,
An undecaying treasure
Far from the world's flaunting toys,
Violent fears, violent joys.

Which, when the morn is gone,
Day past and evening falls,
Thou still mayst look upon
Within the kindly walls,
Oh happy home, oh deeds well done,
How fair ye seem at set of sun!

Days filled with honest love,
With kind endeavour strong,
Down hovering from above
Heaven's not refused song;
The palm of faith, well worth the winning,
Blest end, and yet more blest beginning.

GOLD—OF HEAVEN

More visions of the Eternal; heavenly gold;
Will Heaven ne'er be satisfied with giving?
More gold of grace, and yet men hold it light,
Starved in their poverty of living.
More gold of heaven, the passioned spirits cry;
Ah, deaf ye live, and in your blindness die.

Are ye afeard to touch the sacred thing,
The wondrous gift of glory and of gladness?
Be not afraid, the power that in it dwells
Transmutes unworthiness, enlightens sadness,
“Gold, gold of heaven; gold, gold of heaven,”
Unhoarded and unhoardable, light and grace,
Why; it is cried in every market-place.

“COME YE APART—AND REST AWHILE”

I shall fare forth and dreaming go
Where the still waters flow,
Where, all their mountain-tumult spent
They move in still content,
So shall they soothe my soul, and be
A voice of vision unto me.

No more the huddling rocks that throng,
Echo their clamorous song,
But placid, filled with peace, they brood,
New-entered into quietude.
Ah, waters loud, and bright, and fleet,
Do ye too find that rest is sweet?

“MY LOVE HAS BEDS OF LAVENDER”

My love has beds of lavender,
A garden sweet with rose,
A little cottage set with grace,
And nested in a pretty place
That earliest summer knows.

There, when the owl-winged evening falls
About the quiet wood,
In the cool, shadowed, twilight hours
She stands, a flower amid the flowers,
In the fragrant quietude.

A face of love is my love's face,
Clear eyes, a soul sincere,
A heart of love, by love made light
That holds its heaven as its right
Serene, and ah how dear!

How dear to those who see the light
Of love-born gladness rise,
When turning in the shadowy grove
She flashes welcome, how pure love
Leaps shining in her eyes!

OH SINGING WATERS

Oh singing waters,
Clear streams of the hill,
From the deep-cloven rocks
Ceaselessly welling;
By your edges the mosses
Are soft and deep,
Your music embroiders
The tissues of sleep,
That are woven of dreams
And of visions compelling.

Oh singing waters
Born of thin mist,
That the morning flecks with amethyst,
And evening paints with amber and gold,
Deep from the crags, from the hill's cleft fold,
Ye come—singing.

Deep under earth ye have found you a voice,
In the air ye were silent as bodiless dreams,
The voice of the earth is the voice of your
streams,
That bubbling forth from the well-head cold,
Fountains of rivers manifold,
Multitudinous flash and shine
In bendings and twistings serpentine,
And the side of the hill is streaked with light,
As mid bordering grasses green and bright,
Ye slip and ye lapse—singing.

AN EPITAPH

I lived, I died, and in my dying proved
That life is worth the living; I who sleep,
That of me which doth sleep, in these waste
fields
Of Flanders; thou who dost remember me
Think only this, by utmost love made wise,
“Oh thou the happy, thou the fortunate
Whom kindly death at thy great hour of life
Did loosen from the sorrows of this world
And so made free to live; thrice-happy soul
In living and in dying; we shall follow
And meet, ere no long time.”

THE LOVER

Is there on earth a beauty
To match her beauty,
Or any delicate fineness
Than hers more fine?
Lover, never believe it,
Lest cold disillusion
Steal from thee, made unimmortal,
Love's sweet wine.

While the bright elixir
Subtly courses,
Life through all thy life-blood
Pouring still,
Thine it is, oh lover
To hold the great moment,
Ageless, timeless, deathless,
An thou will.

THE TYRANNY OF LITTLES

Oh for a little space to breathe
And breathing live,
The homage of humility,
To God to give.

Oh for a little space to live
As man should be,
The being of an hour of time
And of eternity.

Oh for a little space of time
When time were nought
When man had leisure to possess
His inmost thought.

Oh for a little space to dream;
But may it be?
The littles of the insistent time
Press all too heavily.

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD CREATED HE HIM

The passion of tumultuous desire
Sweeps through the world; dreams ride the
 stormy air;
Longings, and fears, fierce children of despair
That finds no goal; wild kinsmen of that fire
That feeds its power from heaven; gloomy and
 dire
The clouds with lightning lit; yet grief and
 care,
Strong ministers of vision, shall lay bare
The heart of truth and bid our souls aspire.

Still all unclouded shines one steady star,
Oh star of faith, guide our bewildered way
In hope, which is our life since Time began;
May we, like those of old, whose sons we are,
Stand fearless, mindful, in this troubled day
Of that august, long, lineage of Man.

IN TIME OF TROUBLE

All men are brothers; 'tis a healing phrase,
A word of life in a sick world of ill,
Surely no man can hear it and stand still
'Mid all these barren hours, these pitiless days
That ring men round; our streets, our thick-
thronged ways
Are filled with grief and want, dark powers who
kill
Man's spirit in his breast; the deathless will
Sinks nigh to death, and still the morn delays.

All men are brothers; live it, brother mine,
And love shall teach us, now, as oft of old,
What these our brothers steadfastly endure;
Love, the heaven-born, the potent, the divine,
Love shall unseal our vision, to behold
The patient courage of the dauntless poor.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

I sit and hear the melancholy wind
Mourn for the dying year; the night is cold
And bitter as despair, the moon shines clear
And the wind cries, a desolate lament
Of ancient wrong, a coronach of dead time,
Dead hopes, dead aspirations, dead desires;
All vanished down the eternal corridor
Whose walls are darkness. Cease thou wailing
wind,

There is enough of sorrow in my soul,
More than suffices; I could bode with thee,
Yea, and outbode thee, boding still the worst
And deem it truth, yet still the wingèd hope
Gleams, and a certain constancy of nature,
A blessed gift of our inheritance,
Knits all my powers, and in a clarion call
Cries—Forward.

HOPE AND WISDOM

Hope and wisdom walked erewhile
In a flowery land of May,
Hope with singing would beguile
Their journey, lengthened through
the day;
"Nay," said wisdom, "wait, and see
If good or ill awaiteth thee."

Hope was silent from her song
Till the ending should appear,
Wisdom found the way was long,
Wisdom found the way was drear,
Wisdom said: "'Twas wrong I see,
Sweet sister, so to silence thee."

SIGHT AND INSIGHT

May the great joys that appertain to Insight,
Those splendours of the ever-living soul,
Those angels of the light, whose timeless vision
Sees, and foresees; in whom live all the pities,
Tears, hopes, and reverence, and great adoration
The gift of those who know; may these calm
glories
Compass thee round, arching wide wings above
thee
To guard thee from the sorrow Sight must bring.

TO A CHILD

Roses and lilies and wind in the grass,
Oh the laughing light in the tree,
Thank we God as the glories pass
For the heart to feel and the eye to see;

For of all the gifts of the great God's giving,
The richest he gave to you and to me,
To know the beauty of life and living,
And to understand the wind in the tree.

All the world is full of voices
Singing their music loud and low,
And the heart that hears is the heart that
 rejoices
As all we poets know.

God makes his garden for ever, we know it,
Flowers bud and blossom and pass away,
But the flowers of God in the soul of the
 poet,
They know not winter, they never decay.

Roses and lilies and wind in the grass,
'Tis a lovely world for you and for me;
See how the shadows dance and pass,
And the light how it laughs in the leafy
 tree.

THE ARCHER

A little child, that holds a slender bow,
And from it shoots, with a swift easy grace,
Arrows, as fairy-light as thinnest reeds
That grow beside the water; yet their points
Are smeared with a strange poison; he, the while
Laughs like a very child to hear the hum
Of the tense bow-string answering the stroke
When the shaft speeds; yet he alas is blind
And knows not where these wingèd shafts alight
Bitter of tooth as serpents; nor what blood
The damnèd poison curdles and congeals,
Till death seem kind. Upon his careless brow,
Woven in the fillet that confines his locks,
I saw a legend dimly charactered,
One word, and that his name, 'tis Calumny.

LAKE LOUISE

The eternal walls of silver and of snow
Fronting the morning, and the level lake
Shot like a gem with glories; peak on peak
The close ranged mountains horrent, bastion and
crag

And imminent beetling cliff; all these are thine
Louise, and over all the ethereal sky,
Blue with a deep and living radiance,
Arches, suffused with light: a place of heaven
And under heaven none fairer; set remote,
Secure, amid the strong embattled hills,
For rest, for thought, for dreams. Yet most I
love

That marvellous mirror of the wizard light,
Which evermore the turbulent icy flood,
From the enormous slope and ridged steep,
Feeds with quick waters; scarcely 'twould surprise
To see from out the wave, the fabled hand
Holding the Arthurian sword, Excalibur
Fore-destined for the chosen; how the wave
Shoots from its breast the implicated beams
Of that peculiar shade of emerald
Hardening to blue; and as the quick lights play
The pale fire flashes. Now from the rent crag
Shoots eagle-swift the keen and edged gust,
Dark with black anger; and the lake replies
With frown for stroke, a fierce and raised spirit
Compelled by harsh enchantment from the deep,
The soul of wrath. Even as we look, a change
Shadows and grows and flickers fitfully
As jewels from their angled facets break
The little shafts of light; anon it sleeps,
And sleeping, dreams. The lake is all alive,
Possessed as by a permeating soul
Whose being breathes in light, and as it breathes,
Girds up the aspiring soul invincible
Of him who views, marvels, and worships there,
Caught by earth's magic in her holy place,
Beyond expression rapt. Ineffable

Are all the works of God, when the clear eye
Discerns their glory in an inward sense
Of sympathy enlightened and made wise,
True cognizance whose kinship is divine.
Therefore thou lake most lovely, I renew
My spirit in thy spirit, unforgetting
How that sea boils, where the vexed souls of men
Strive in their myriads, longing to be free.
For out of musings in tranquillity,
The mind begets a spiritual brood
Of fancies girt for service, high resolves,
Pity, and love, and patience, and desire,
Infinite longing toward the sons of men.

THE MUSES

Who would hear the muses
Singing on the mountains,
Let him silence keep;
Silence of the spirit,
Silence of the breathing,
He must both wake, and sleep.

Clear fine music
Exquisitely falling,
The soul of perfect song.
Ah, ye muses!
Exacting, compelling,
Ye speak not for the throng.

In the grey clefts
Of the sacred mountains,
Where the mists are white as
snow,
Live the muses,
Eternal, immortal,
They only hear, who know.

SILOAM

I have a pool beneath a small oak tree,
Where oft at daybreak I do much delight
To see the birds appear, to drink and bathe,
Quick-eyed, neat-feathered; many and many a
time,
Brooding on all the great and lesser cares,
Man's comrades still, I watch admiringly
The delicate, sidelong dashes and quick swoops,
And hear the water broken, and the whirr
Of startled robins flying with wet wings
For safety to the tree. This living scene,
Its little actors playing each his part
With natural sudden flash of dominance,
With bickerings, and with wary watchfulness,
Hath in my musing moments shone so clear,
With such a comment on the world of men,
That I perforce have smiled, so to behold
This miniature of human intercourse:
And I have smiled again, to think how far
From utmost grief our fretting troubles are.

SONG GROWS NOT OLD

What! must I sing
The note of the day?
Pipe the new way,
Sing and be new,
To be counted true?
Nay, not I.

Let them beat out
The new found measure
If such be their pleasure
Such music to make.
The song I sing
Is old as Time,
Old as melody,
Linked with rhyme;
That fairy-fine net
A-chime with bells
That sing to its moving.
Music dwells,
Lingers, beats, and buds,
and grows,
And the song like a rose
bush
With many a rose,
Breathes from fine petals
That breath, which is song.

“RICH MAN, POOR MAN”

Rich man and poor man,
What shall they say?
When each meets the other
On the long last way.

There is no starlight
Their way to guide,
There is no sunshine
From any side.

Each meeteth each
In the darkness alone;
“Have a care, brother,
Here stands a stone.”

“Have a care, brother,
Here is a pit.”
Oh what is wealth
Or the want of it?

“Hast thou eyes, brother?”
“Nay I have none,
All my seeing
Is but begun.”

“Hast thou eyes, brother?”
“Nay, I was too meek,
All my seeing
Is yet to seek.”

Rich man and poor man,
Blindly they go,
The great God in Heaven
Meant not so.

LOVE AND DEATH

In one dim hour love and gray death
Together stood by me,
Pain seized my soul, and fear was there,
Bleak dread, strong misery,

To love, the shadowing presence said,
"I come, restore thy flowers
They were but lent thee for a time,
A short time of swift hours.

"I am the angel of the Lord,
Thus said the Lord to me,
Go thou, strong Death, take thou from Love,
Her brief felicity.

"Her golden moments, her sweet days
To thee she shall resign."
He ceased, the shadow of his soul
Spread darkening over mine.

To whom the other, with bright face,
Serene with heavenly power,
Answered, "Thou knowest not, oh Death,
Thy message, nor the hour.

"The flowers of joy are thine indeed
By God's supreme decree,
My flowers, the flowers of love are born
To immortality."

Her strong, supreme, unstriving strength
O'ermastering, rose and shone,
Death shrank together as a fog
The sun has looked upon.

THE QUARREL

“Strike home and end the wretched strife,”
The spirit whispered, breathing sore,
Within my hand I found the knife;
Yet,—I forbore.

About my wrist a web was knit,
A hampering web, unknown before,
“Strike,” breathed the Darkness, “and be
quit,”
Yet,—I forbore.

“IN FAITH AND DUTY FIRMLY SET”

In faith and duty firmly set,
In honour clear and spotless truth,
Thou gavest to the eternal God
The golden hours of youth.

No laggard gifts of later flowers
Thou laidst upon that altar dread,
No blossoms gathered from the storm
With half their graces fled;

But dewy from the folded bud
And touched alone by wind and light,
The sacred flowers of faith and truth
That made thy morning bright.

Oh potent spirit, keen and kind,
And cheerful as the eye of day,
A child of God, a happy soul,
Upon a sunlit way.

Accept the thanks of one who treads
A darker road, with heavier pace,
Yet feels his heart grow strong, to see
Thy heaven in thy face.

A PRAIRIE THUNDERSTORM

Now while swoops the tempest
Broad-winged and tremendous,
Wide above the prairie
Darkening many a mile,
Here let us sit, companioned in
kindness,
 Some short while.

Here, while o'er our roof-tree
Thunders and lightens
The over-mastering splendour
And terror of the sky,
Here let us gather thoughts of
remembrance,
 You and I.

We have beheld the bright light
darkened,
And after darkness
The fresh-sprung day,
Compassed with light, we tread,
or in blackness,
 No lone way.

Ever the wild rose
Breathes from the way-side,
Rocky the way
But our footing is sure,
Twain we journey, twain we
triumph,
 Twain, still endure.

See the skirts of thunder
Sweeping and passing,
Sun-smitten the wheat fields
Mile upon mile,
All the land lightens, shrouded
in darkness
 Some short while.

CONTENT

When powers are gone and life nigh spent,
Happy is he for whom content
Sits by his hearth, a kindly guest,
A comfort to the outworned breast.

Passion and mirth have passed away
Through the dark door at close of day;
The sounding, storming beat of wings,
The voice of youth that striving, sings,
Their joys are mixed with equal pain,
Sweet passion; they may not remain;
They may not revel as of yore,
They hie them forth, are seen no more.

Yet bright and strong the clear fire glows,
Its heart is red as any rose,
For life, lived well, in joy and power,
Hails thee dear comrade at this hour.
Oh happy hearts, and innocent,
Whose comrade is this sweet content.

A CHANT

Gray upon green,
Green upon gray,
Where is the bird
Sang on the spray?
The riot of summer echoes away,
Echoes—away.

Quiet on quiet,
Broods and broods,
In the archèd aisles of the autumn woods,
Gray upon green,
Green upon gray,
Still is the day.

A softness shadows the delicate light,
And the etched branches exquisite;
The leaves are falling, dying in gold,
The skies are clear, and the air is cold,
And the smallest of winds begins to creep,
And, sighing, soothes her into her sleep,
Summer.

THIS BROKEN MUSIC

This broken music that we fondly make,
Famished for Life; this offspring of desire
That grasps for worlds, and in its hand at last
Finds but a little flower, and that soon past;
This broken music.

Oh dream so great and such a thin fulfilling,
So flat, so tame, this end of all our willing.
This that is God within us as we call,
Impassioned in our longing and our stress,
In broken words of querulous childishness
For Life, for Life.

For Life, for Life we longing, hungering, cry,
And pass in longing; yet this death is Life
The true-begotten child and heir of strife.
Yea, each and all of us, and you and I,
Live where we fail, and weave from these our
cries

This broken music, which at Heaven's high gate
Shall be accepted, every tone made true,
True and accordant, to the high, supreme
Involved powers and glories of our dream;
All counted done for all we strove to do.
So speaks for all of us, for me, for you,
This broken music.

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